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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/086,362	03/04/2002	Naoto Yamada	Q67143	2731
7590 05/12/2004			EXAMINER	
SUGHRUE, MION, ZINN, MACPEAK & SEAS, PLLC			TRAN, HUAN HUU	
Suite 800			ART UNIT	
2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.			PAPER NUMBER	
Washington, DC 20037-3213			2861	

DATE MAILED: 05/12/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/086,362

Applicant(s)

YAMADA, NAOTO

Examiner

Huan H. Tran

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 April 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 11-21 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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1. Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the claims are directed to neither a "process" nor a "machine," but rather embraces or overlaps two different statutory classes of invention set forth in 35 U.S.C. 101 which is drafted so as to set forth the statutory classes of invention in the alternative only. *Id.* at 1551.

Ex parte Lyell (BdPatApp&Int) 17 USPQ2d 1548 (8/16/1990) (Claim which is intended to embrace both product or machine and process is precluded by language of 35 USC 101, which sets forth statutory classes of invention in alternative only, and is also invalid under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, since claim which purports to be both machine and process is ambiguous and therefore does not particularly point out and distinctly claim subject matter of invention)

4. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 and dependent claims thereof are indefinite for failure to positively recite in the claim sufficient structural limitations to support the functional wherein statements with respect to the function of the conveyance rollers. The conveyance rollers themselves cannot perform the recited function without the control of a controller. Per MPEP 2173.05(g), a functional limitation is often used in association with an element,

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ingredient, or step of a process to define a particular capability or purpose that is served by the recited element, ingredient or step. In this regard, the recited elements specifically recited in the claims, namely the two pairs of conveyance rollers and the leading edge detector, cannot perform the recited function by themselves.

Furthermore, the claims are indefinite for inclusion in the claims both the structural limitations regarding an apparatus and method steps. See MPEP 2173.05(p) (II) regarding hybrid claim, citing Ex parte Lyell, 17 USPQ2d 1548 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1990).

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 11-21 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed on 04/22/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

An argument is made that Claim 1 specifically describes a detector for a leading edge of a photosensitive material and releasing and nipping the material with rollers based on the detector output. As such, the claim is indefinite for inclusion in the claims both the structural limitations regarding an apparatus and method steps. See MPEP 2173.05(p) (II) regarding hybrid claim, citing Ex parte Lyell, 17 USPQ2d 1548 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1990).

Argument made regarding the art rejection of the claims over prior art that "The Examiner cannot fully consider the functional considerations for purposes of the 112 issue and then disregard these same limitations when considering patentability over prior art. To continue the rejections long

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these lines is not only incorrect, pursuant to MPEP 2143.03, but also unfair to Applicant" is persuasive. The rejection is withdrawn. However, the Examiner maintains the rejection of the claims under 112, 2nd paragraph for lack of recitation in the claims of structural limitations to support the functional language. The claims fail to recite any structural support to perform the control of the nipping and releasing.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Huan H. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-2261. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F with Monday off, from 7:30am to 6pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Meier can be reached on (571) 272-2149. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Huan H. Tran
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2861

hht
05/07/04